

MPO Follow-up Questions

Revised: 6/1/10

1. If you were to fully account for the impact of the recession in your region, how would the % reductions in GHG/capita numbers change for each scenario in 2020?

This may be difficult to answer with any absolute answer, but we feel we have been able to take into account (to some extent) the impact of the recession in the process of developing the short-term (2020) scenarios. In May 2009, revised long-range projections were approved by the SLOCOG board with the intention of accounting for the impact of the recession. The revised projections resulted in negative employment growth for 2008 to 2010, limited employment growth from 2010 to 2015, with a slight increase in employment growth from 2015 to 2020. Net regional employment growth is projected to be about 5,000 jobs from 2008 to 2020.

Only two scenarios were developed for year 2020. These scenarios were developed between April and May of this year, after consulting with planning staff of each of our member jurisdictions to gain their input on the land use projects that would be more likely to be completed by 2020, given the current economic conditions and housing market being what it is. As it turned out, SLOCOG staff allocated less housing in each of the two 2020 land use scenarios than the population and employment projections (May 2009) prescribe, based on the sluggish housing market over the last three years (2009 residential building permits were about 17% of total residential permits issued in 2004 and 2005, with limited confidence that 2010 permit activity will pick up much from last year.)

- a. In what ways has the economy affected your region (e.g. population, jobs, unemployment, new development, foreclosures, vacancy rates, etc.)?

Population: slower growth in population, likely due to a lack of immigration of retirees from other counties, as well as a slow-down in job creation and cuts by employers across several industries.

Employment: The region has experienced a net loss of about 2,000 to 3,000 jobs over the last two years, with cuts coming in both public and private sectors.

Unemployment: Unemployment has been hovering at near-historic county highs over the past 1 to 2 years.

New development: Dramatically slower growth in new development. As noted above, residential permit activity in 2009 was about 17% of residential permits issued in 2004 and 2005, with 2007 through 2009 showing a dramatic drop-off in permit activity from the early part of the

decade. 2010 does not appear to show much signs of a pick-up in permit activity from 2009.

Foreclosures: Foreclosures have ticked up over the last few years, but the region has not been hit severely by the foreclosure crisis as counties in major metropolitan areas in California (i.e., Sacramento, Inland Empire, etc.) likely due to the slower growth rates and the smaller-scale of residential development projects in the region.

Vacancy rates: We do not have updated vacancy rate figures at this time to be able to identify a change in the last few years over the historic patterns of vacancy rates in the county.

- b. If you have already included the impact of the recession, where is it reflected in your scenario data?

The impact of the recession is accounted for in the recently updated population and employment projection report (May 2009), which projects a small net employment growth of just 5,000 jobs from 2008 to 2020. Population figures for 2020 were adjusted lower by SLOCOG staff than those prescribed in the adjusted projections report.

- 2. What factors cause the reductions in 2020 to be different from 2035, and where do they show up in your data?

There is a slower annual pace of growth from 2008 to 2020 than the period from 2021 to 2035. A higher share of the region's housing growth is allocated to the Central County subregion (which includes San Luis Obispo) in the period from 2008 to 2020 than the period from 2021 to 2035. This is reflected in summary data that is generated by I-PLACE3S. Please request this if necessary.

Additionally, from 2008 to 2035, the jobs-housing balance improves slightly in the North County (Paso Robles and Atascadero) and in the South County (Five Cities and Nipomo Mesa) subregions, possibly helping to explain the reduction in VMT and GHG per capita for 2035.

- 3. What model improvements, changes in planning assumptions, or additional policies are you considering that were not used in developing your scenarios?

- a. How will they impact the direction and/or magnitude of change?

- 4. Have the sensitivities of your model changed since the 2009 Model Evaluation Survey conducted for RTAC? If yes, please explain why. (i.e., are you using any new models or postprocessors to develop your scenarios that were not evaluated during the RTAC Survey?)

In consultation with Fehr & Peers, SLOCOG developed a post-processor to evaluate mode choice and the additional reduction in VMT and GHG that could be realized from investments in TDM and transit and changes in parking costs (in downtown areas). The regional traffic model by itself is a 3-step model (without mode choice).

5. Did you add, remove, or change the level of deployment of any transportation projects or programs in your scenarios? If so, what type of projects or programs?
6. Please provide calculations of Vehicle Miles Traveled per capita as well as Greenhouse Gas Emissions per capita in reporting results of the evaluation of your adopted RTP and alternative scenarios.